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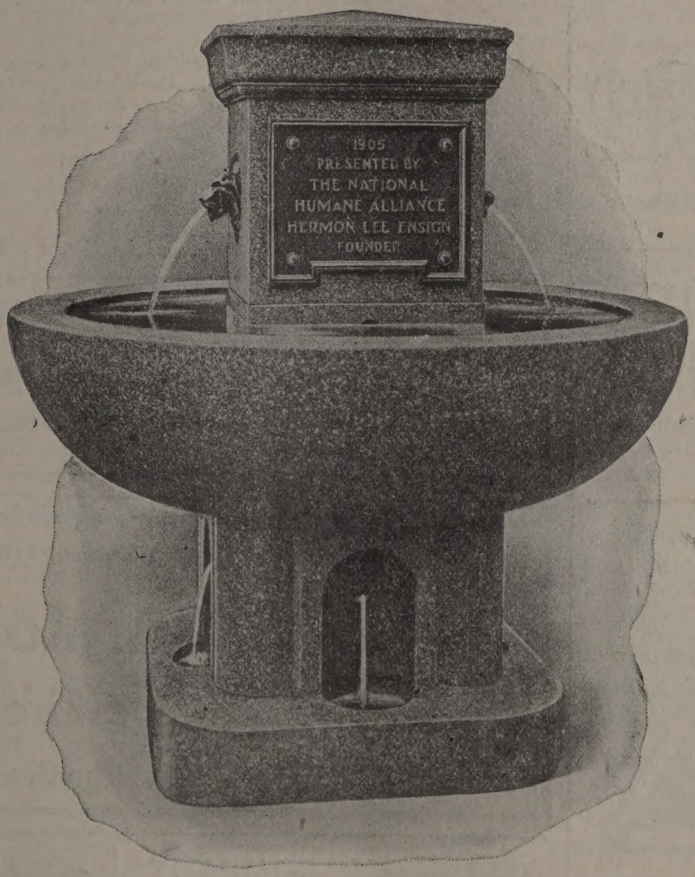
UNITY

Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion

Official Organ of the Congress of Religion



FOUNTAIN IN OAKLAND SQUARE,
Dedicated May 26, 1912.

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UNITY

"HE HATH MADE OF ONE ALL NATIONS OF MEN"

Vol. LXIX. THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1912. NUMBER 12.

THINGS BEFORE WORDS

The great words never were writ,
The great songs never were sung;
They that were greatest did their deed
Without the pen or tongue.

The word from a heart of flame
Blazed and flickered and died;
The moving song the minstrel sang
Passed with the time and tide.

But the words that never were writ
And the songs that never were sung,
In the silent hearts of heroes wrought
Without the pen or tongue.

Instead of the word—a deed,
Instead of the song—a man;
The things that are greatest were fashioned thus
Since the world began.

—*Harrold Johnson.*

There is something sublimely pathetic in the recent two hundred and twenty-fifth celebration of the anniversary of the founding of the first Huguenot Church of Charleston, South Carolina, the sole surviving church of those brave French refugees left in America. During a recent trip of the writer to the South, he was permitted a visit with the gracious pastor, Dr. Charles S. Vedder who, in his eighty-sixth year and with eyes totally closed to the light of day, still occupies the pulpit, conducts a rich liturgical service, reads his Bible and hymns and preaches vigorously out of his well-stored memory chambers. When he dies, this cathedral church of the Huguenots, attractive in architecture, rich in traditions, and noble in its representatives, whose descendants are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land, will probably be closed. Much precious seed came over in the Mayflower from which grew notable timber for the rearing of the republic, but *all* the seed of independence and democracy that furnished material with which to construct the state, did *not* come over in the Mayflower or its associates. France furnished the Huguenots and Lord Baltimore, as England furnished the Pilgrims of England and the Cavaliers of Virginia. There is honor enough for all, and the credit should be passed all around.

Abdul-Baha has discovered already that the slogan of the American people is "All right!" Wherever he goes, he meets this exclamation, from bell-boy to the landlady, and he ventures the opinion that this expression "typically reflects the optimism of this great country." Perhaps it reflects something less complimentary than optimism—carelessness, superficial indifference. The true optimism must often exclaim, "All's wrong, and must be righted!" Professor Henderson, of the University of Chicago, in a recent address before the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology, did not declare that everything was "All right" in Chicago, but rather he said that if the devil desired to bring about crime and the conditions that foster it, he could not conceive any better plan than to follow the lead of those who have established the Chicago jails. He found that Chicago itself is largely a temporary camp for millions of human beings on a flat and swampy district. He declared our public neglect of children and youth in respect to their recreation and vocational training, the impotence of the police, the unholy alliance and nefarious partnership of politicians in hiring and maintaining mercenary troops, enemies of social order, hot-beds of vice, disease and crime, to be characteristic causes of evil. No! everything is not yet "All right," but it is being made right by such timely warnings, followed by such active efforts for improvement as are represented by the men and women of whom Professor Henderson is a type.

"The Drain of Armaments" is the title of a twenty-page pamphlet, No. 5, Part 1, issued by the World Peace Foundation, 29-A Beacon street, Boston. The pages are crowded with figures which ought to carry conviction to the economists. If there be commercial men, bankers, etc., who love best to think in figures, or who, perchance, have lost the power of thinking clearly on any other line, here is food for thought. Some of these figures are so plain that even a minister, unaccustomed to money columns, can see the point. The annual armament bill of the world is put down at $2,263,332,000; that of the United States alone amounts to $283,086,000. The cost of the army per unit of fighting force in the United States is $1,910 per man. The same costs $3.07 per capita of the entire population. The United States gives 43.3 per cent of its total expenditure to the military, and it expended $24,240,000 more in 1911 than it did thirty years before, in 1881. The bill has steadily increased. It costs us more now than it did in the year

of the war with Spain, which ended in the ungracious war with the little people of the Pacific. Last year, the war expenses of all kinds in the United States represented $441,066,462, while for all civic purposes there was expended only $213,071,536, and still patriotism calls for more battleships; it is disloyal to call a halt on military expenses, and it is the part of wisdom to be "scared" at an impossible enemy, making impossible attacks, for inconceivable ends, upon a country that is invulnerable when it is in the right and when it attends to its own business.

It is sad to reflect that the Congress that has established a Child Welfare Bureau and broken the mischievous power of the indirect election of senators, still shuffles and hesitates, falters and cringes in the presence of the Lorimer disgrace. That Lorimer dishonors the chair he occupies, that he soils the toga he wears, that he broke into what ought to be this high nobility by means that were crooked and tactics that were despicable, nearly every rational man in the United States, particularly among those who lived near to him in the city of Chicago and the state of Illinois, was persuaded long before the costly investigation began. The committee hesitates long. The Senate is long uncertain. Why this unseemly delay? Why this evasion? The *Outlook*, speaking of a certain pamphlet issued to set forth the purity and innocence of Mr. Edward Hines, says:

> Even if it is absolutely false, as we hope it is, Mr. Hines's good name is not redeemed from its intimate association with the name of Senator Lorimer. Senator Lorimer represents a schol of politics which every intelligent American citizen knows is rotton to the core. The pamphlet entitled "The Story of Edward Hines" clearly shows that if Mr. Hines was not a pupil in this school he was, at least, in intimate association with its scholars. It is that association which has taken from him his good name, and not any specific charges as to specific acts. But this does not relieve Mr. Hines from the responsibility of having advocated and approved the election of William Lorimer when he must have known as well as anybody in Chicago the political methods and principles which Mr. Lorimer represents. If this Republic is ever destroyed, it will be destroyed by the social and political corruption which inevitably spring from the partnership between legislators and special interests. Those men betray their country who, for the sake of accumulating great bank deposits, either prostitute themselves or wink at the prostitution of others in the enactment and administration of law for selfish purposes.

Once more Miss Jane Addams has placed the public under a debt of gratitude to her for having spoken out of her exceptional wisdom and experience the frank, plain, and convincing words concerning the most universal of sins, the sex sins against body and soul. Surely, it is an "ancient evil," and one which, unlike many of the evils of primitive man, has not only defied the forces of civilization but has thriven in its presence. There can be no denial of the fact that the sins of lust and the commercialism based upon the same have prospered if many of them have not been created by the complexities of what we call civilization. But it is no more sure that this is an "ancient evil" than it is certain that there is a "new conscience" concerning it. And this new conscience has sprung out of the new knowledge, the scientific analysis of the situation. This growth in sin is the product not of the lust of the flesh, but of the lust for dollars, the greed for money, and the tinsel that money brings. The social evil, as known in modern times, is the perversion of the commercial spirit, all of which is set forth in this last book of Jane Addams, fresh from the press of the Macmillan Company. This book, though standing on its own basis, may be taken as a comment and a condensation of the recent elaborate report of the Chicago Vice Commission. That book and this may well be taken as the latest word upon the subject, and, gruesome as are the facts here printed, the report and Miss Addams' book on "A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil" are shot through and through with hopefulness. Now that we know better the nature of the beast, we may more effectively attack him in his lair, and we dare hope that even this, the arch enemy, will receive his death blow. Not that the passions of men and women will be eliminated, heaven forbid! but the commercialism of the same, the insolent organization of capital for its exploitation can and must be eliminated. No compromise with these fiendish ghouls who make money out of the pitiable victims of lust is to be considered. They must be driven, if out of one territory into another, as objectionists claim, then out of that "other territory" into still newer ground, until at last, like the devil-possessed pigs of the New Testament, they are driven over the brink and drowned in the sea.

Spite of its hesitation and entanglements, the present Congress is doing something notable, and will go down in history as a Congress that has achieved at least two pieces of epoch-making legislation—one which has established the Bureau of Child Welfare, and the other, that which has remanded the election of senators back into the hands of the people, whom they are supposed to represent. The first enactment carried with it the significant appointment of a woman to be the head of the bureau, and that woman is Julia Lathrop, one who within the limits of her own city and state has long since won eminence among administrative students of public welfare. Nothing but the fact of her being a woman and the still more obstructing fact that she is independent and incorruptible, has kept her from being placed long since at the head of the State Board of Charities and Reform. The second act has put one more nail into the coffin that is to bury political patronage, boss rule, and the dominating power of capital over men.

A man born in Scotland, educated at the University of Edinburgh, a pupil of Prof. Stuart Blackie, one who hunted diamonds in Kimberly and found them; who ran a sheep ranch in Colorado; was president of the Public Library, in the city of his adoption; organized the first Humane Society in his state; continued its chief executive officer; was president of a national bank; promoter of many important business schemes; one who was in great demand as a reader of Burns, Browning, and Shakespeare—such a man was the one who helped establish the All Souls Church of Colorado Springs, Colorado, was its first president, and for many years president of the Rocky Mountain Conference of Unitarian Churches. Of him it was said: "He was a man without guile; a tireless soldier of the truth as God gave him to see it." He was a man whom men delight to honor, and who honored the causes he espoused. This man's name was Francis B. Hill, and this story we glean from a neat memorial pamphlet. But what if the name had been lost and the pamphlet had remained unpublished? All the same, the benignant life had been blessed in the countless number of men, women, children, and animals that were blessed by it.

"Care for no name at all,
The great deed ne'er grows small."

Hermon Lee Ensign

An interesting out-door dedication occurred a few days ago in the city of Chicago when a granite drinking fountain for horses and dogs was dedicated in the Oakland Square, just one block east of the Unity office in the Abraham Lincoln Centre. The fountain was carved out of a comely mass of Maine granite, as will be seen from the illustration on our front page. It was transported here at the cost of about one thousand dollars, and presented to the city on condition that the water connections should be established and maintained free of cost by the city.

The children of the neighboring Oakland school gathered around the fountain and sang "Illinois" and other songs of patriotism. An address was given by the senior editor of Unity, who said in part:

" I am here to speak for this community, for the Chicago Anti-Cruelty Society, by courtesy, and for the city of Chicago, but mostly I am here to speak for the goods friends who cannot speak for themselves, the patient horses who are waiting for their drink and who, through the long, hot summer days, have gone without the drink for which they thirsted because none was provided for them. You children are here to turn on the water which will allow no horse in this neighborhood to go thirsty; no dog to run mad for want of drink; no bird to fly over unrefreshed.

"We cannot adequately dedicate this fountain without telling the story of the man through whose generosity this granite from the mountain of Maine has been shaped into beauty and brought here.

"A little boy was born into a farmer's home in Carbondale, Pennsylvania, sixty-three years ago. When he was fifteen years old his father moved West and settled on the prairies of Illinois, and the village of Sheffield grew up around his farm. The boy learned early to be a telegraph operator, and served as such at Davenport and Denver. At twenty-two he kept the books for a large business firm, and when the great fire came, he displayed signal heroism in saving the books of his employer. About this time he was moved to be a minister and began to study for this end, but health and funds failing, he came back to Chicago and became an appreciative listener of the great and kind-hearted David Swing, who was a friend not only to all men and women, but to the horse and dog and bird. And this young man assisted the big-hearted preacher to extend his gospel through the printed page. He was the business manager of the *Alliance,* a journal characterized by the historian as "mildly religious but widely humanitarian." The young man's efficiency grew. The printing business gave him a career and carried him from Chicago to Rochester, and from there to New York. When but fifty years old he was a man of wealth. Then death came to him; but the sermons of the great-hearted Chicago preacher had done their lasting work, and he left his fortune to the National Humane Alliance, which he had organized and of which he was the directing spirit. This "loving cup" and three others erected in different parts of the city for the horses have been bought with funds from this estate. The horses of Oakland Square are offered free drink by the hand of Herman Lee Ensign, the parishioner of David Swing. Let us all speak his name together.—Hermon Lee Ensign!"

We are informed by the secretary of the Anti-Cruelty Society of Chicago, that there are over two hundred and fifty thousand horses and mules in the city, and about two hundred thousand dogs, to say nothing of the other animals. We are also informed that this society sustains ten drinking fountains in the city of Chicago; that the Illinois Humane Society maintains between seventy-five and eighty; that the Woman's Outdoor League maintains five, and that there are probably a dozen others erected by churches and similar institutions throughout the city; but that the saloons of Chicago have at least two thousand drinking troughs in the city, eighty per cent of which are kept in actual running order. These figures will explain why the editor of Unity and his good horse Roos radically differed on one point. She loved the saloon and he loathed it. She spied it from afar and quickened her steps to the refreshing fountain. If

the human drinker could only be satisfied with the outdoor hospitalities of the saloon, the writer would agree with his mount upon its value.

But is it not a reproach that this obvious humanity to the obedient, patient, and silent friend of man should be so neglected by the would-be representatives of the gospel of love and kindness? Oh, the inadequacy of the drinking fountains in cities, in hamlets, and on the country roads! And where shall we put this responsibility more justly than at the doors of the church? Where should horse and dog look for the refreshing draught which the careless owner and the hardened driver do not provide, if not at the threshold of the church dedicated to service and to worship, at the cross-roads, where the country schoolhouse is?

We often mourn that the high ministry of David Swing has left so little outward record of itself in the city of Chicago; but here, at least, through the benignant mediation of his errand boy, David Swing has a fitting monument in Chicago, and his name should be held in tender love in connection with that of Hermon Lee Ensign.

INHIBITION

Oh, for the blithesomeness of birds,
Whose soul floods ever to their tongue!
But to be impotent of words
With blinding tears and heart unstrung!

Each breeze that blows from homeward brings
To me, who am so far away,
The memory of tender things
I might have said and did not say.

Like spirit children, wraiths unborn,
To luckless lovers long ago,
Shades of emotion, mute, forlorn,
Within my brain stalk to and fro.

When to my lips they rush, and call,
A nameless something rears its head,
Forbidding like the spectral wall
Between the living and the dead.

O guardian of the nether mind,
Where atavistic terrors reel
In dark cerebral chambers, bind
Old nightmares with they mystic seal!

But bar not from the sonant gate
Of being with thy fiery sword
The sweetest thing we wring from fate:
Love's one imperishable word!

—*George Sylvester Viereck.*

FROM THE POET'S CORNER
(Westminster Abbey.)

I.

Time was I teased thee to reveal
Thine unknown Face to me;
Yet, grant not, God, that foolish prayer
I asked long since of Thee!

II.

Leave me Thy nights, thus gemmed with stars,
Thy glooms, through which to grope,
Since from the dusk of Doubt can sing
The nightingales of hope.

—*Arthur Stringer.*

THE PULPIT
An All-the-World Theistic Conference*

INTERVIEW WITH THE GRAND MUFTI, HEAD OF THE MOHAMMEDAN COMMUNITY IN PALESTINE.

As stated in a previous communication, it was the desire of our well-informed and widely acquainted guide in Jerusalem, the learned Professor Kiefferndorf, that we should come to know still more of its many-sided religious life. Hitherto we had studied only the Jewish and Christian institutions. He now proposed that we should seek an interview with the Grand Mufti, the head of the Mohammedan community in Palestine. As I had a suggestion to lay before that dignitary, the proposal was gladly accepted.

Accompanied by a young Mohammedan school teacher, we proceeded by carriage, at nightfall, to the dwelling, on the slope of the Mount of Olives, of the eminent head of the Mussulman community of Palestine. His abode is extremely simple, as becomes a man of spiritual thought and occupations. Shown into a room modestly, almost meagerly, furnished, we were presently joined by the Mufti, in whom I was surprised to find a young man, slender and spare in figure, arrayed in a long tunic of black, without ornament of any kind. The folds of a simple white turban crowned his bearded, intellectual, almost ascetic features. With a winning smile, M. Kamil El-Housseini, whose honored father occupied the position before him, motioned us to a divan. A servant entered and proffered black coffee and cigarettes, and without formalities of any kind the conversation began. This time it was I who opened the discussion, which was carried on through the medium of our bright and scholarly interpreter, the Mufti speaking in Arabic and I in English.

After expressing to his reverence my thanks for his complaisance in granting me the interview and my desire to pay him my respects before leaving the Holy City, I proceeded, at his request, to inform him concerning my own religious point of view and that of my Unitarian co-religionists in Great Britain, Hungary, and the United States of America. However we might differ on essential points of belief from the followers of Mahomet, there was one leading article of religion on which we were at one with them—the first and most important of doctrines. There is One Eternal God, undivided in person or substance or essence, the common father of all men. As strict Monotheists we rejected the notion that any mediatorial person or rite was needed to enable us to worship and come into direct spiritual communion with the All-Father. While we acknowledged and remained loyal to our Christian line of descent, we were also in intellectual and spiritual sympathy with the central principle of Mohammedan faith.

The Grand Mufti here inquired: "Whence do you derive this knowledge of the Divine Unity?"

I replied: "From an intelligent study of nature; from the revelation of God in history; from the soul's own testimony as to the character of its being and derivation; from the Bible and holy books of all the ages. Jesus himself was a profound believer in the Divine Unity."

**This article, reprinted from the "Christian Register," can be obtained in separate leaflet upon application to the address below.*

Visibly impressed, my host begged me to continue my exposition of the Unitarian faith, of which he had known something, but not in any detail. For half an hour or more the main points of liberal Christian theology were discussed between us, the Mohammedan scholar asking questions which disclosed both his interest and his intellectual keenness.

What did we think of Jesus?

"He was the inspired prophet and messenger of God to our souls. Unitarians differ in the precise estimate they make of his nature and mission, but they all deny that he was Deity in any sense or that he should be worshiped as such. They revere him much as Moslems reverence their own great prophet Mahomet."

"True, but Abraham and Moses, as well as Jesus, were prophets of God."

I assented—each was a divinely sent messenger to his generation. Then came the crucial question: "What do you think of Mahomet?"

I replied: "Christians differ widely in their estimate of him. Speaking for myself and for all the Unitarians I know, I regard him as having been a great prophet bringing a divine message to his race and time. That his word is still with power, we may see today in Africa and Asia where Mohammedan missionaries are making more converts than the Christian, and lifting whole peoples out of the degradation of polytheism, slavery, and intertribal wars into the consciousness of the one only God and a common brotherhood."

The Mufti's eyes shone. With emotion he said: "We are spiritual brothers! What you profess to me shows that you already possess the essential doctrine of Islam, the one, eternal God, of undivided essence and holiness. Go on to proclaim this basic truth until all men shall acknowledge and find its saving power."

Not a little moved by the Mufti's responsive and kindly spirit, I ventured to remind him that co-operative endeavors would best advance the spread of a true theistic faith, and made to him a suggestion which was in my mind when I sought the interview—namely, that a conference be arranged in the near future between the friends and representatives of a pure and lofty Monotheism, such as the Jews, the Brahmo and Arya Somajes of India, the new Buddhists, the Theosophists, the Parsees, the Sikhs, the Bahaists, the Mohammedans, and theistic sects in Christendom like the Unitarians and Universalists, and many others. At this conference or congress, which should be held in some great center of religion—Jerusalem or Delhi, for instance—a united and impressive testimony should be given to the great central truth of all religion—the existence, unity, eternity, greatness and goodness of God, the Creator, Preserver, and Father of all mankind. No other religious or doctrinal topic should be considered. All minor questions of belief or worship should be left to each religious community to settle for itself. There should be no opportunity given for differences. Unity should be the keynote of the congress from first to last.

The Grand Mufti seemed much impressed with the proposal, but, with a breadth which did him honor, suggested that it might be only just to invite the orthodox Christians to be present and tell us why they believed in a Triune God.

"What results," he asked, "might be expected to flow from such a conference of Monotheists?"

"First," I replied, "it would make apparent the truth which the present rector of the University of Geneva, the eminent Semitic scholar, Professor Montet, has set forth in an able treatise, that the number of persons in the world professing Monotheism is greater than the number of Trinitarians, and that they should find in this common faith a bond of religious brotherhood.

"Secondly, this common profession of faith in the existence and unity of the Godhead would mightily reassure and inspire the religious fellowships participating in it.

"Thirdly, it would correspondingly impress the Trinitarian world, and conduce to a re-interpretation and revision of Christian faith in accordance with the earlier teaching of their church and the larger spiritual needs of humanity.

"Fourthly, it would be made more apparent than ever, through so widely representative a testimony, that we live in a theocentric universe; that God is the common Father of all men; that all alike owe him allegiance, gratitude, and obedience.

"Finally, it would dawn upon all taking part in such a demonstration that, if God is the universal Father, all men should know and feel that they are brethren, and should live together in fraternal relations of peace, good-will, and mutual helpfulness."

The good Mufti's face beamed with approval and assent. He would be pleased to participate in such a meeting and discuss in a friendly way the great basic truth of religion. But I should do well to lay the matter before the Sheik-el-Islam, the supreme head of the Mussulman world, in Constantinople. Perhaps, too, a more central, accessible place, like Paris, would be better suited for such a gathering than distant and sometimes inaccessible Jerusalem, where, however, he would gladly welcome such a convention.

On parting, the Grand Mufti gave me his autograph in Arabic, and, clasping my hand in both his own, said affectionately: "One who has such grand ideas should learn the Arabic language. May the one true God be with you on your journeying till you reach you own home in peace and happiness!"

With this benediction and the memory of his handsome, kind face to linger with me in connection with my visit, I went forth under the brilliant starlight of a Syrian sky to rejoin my waiting friends in the holy city of Jerusalem.

The foregoing proposal to hold in one or more of the great centers of Monotheistic faith a conference of believers in the unity of God and of mankind is submitted to you and the religious fellowship to which you belong for serious consideration and, it is hoped, favorable action. The initial steps to make such a conference actual have already been taken.

Any communications on this subject addressed to the undersigned will receive prompt attention. Do not delay, in case the proposal meets your approval, to send him your individual adhesion and any suggestions you may feel inclined to offer.

CHARLES W. WENDTÉ, D. D.
25 Beacon street, Boston, Mass., U. S. A.

Out of the vast the voice of One replies
Whose words are clouds and stars and night and day,
When for the light the anguished spirit cries
Deep in its house of clay.

—*A. E.*

Are the Churches Efficient?

Whether or not a church is efficient, depends largely upon what one understands by the word "efficient." Judged by present-day standards of *business* efficiency, most of the old "First Parishes," East or West, with their costly plants, endowments, and priceless traditions, yet, withal, dwindling congregations, and still smaller Sunday-schools, would be indeed classed as inefficient. In consideration of the actual number of people reached and influenced directly by many of these parishes, the financial outlay is altogether disproportionate.

Undoubtedly, many of our churches in America are exempt from this criticism. Yet ministers are sometimes forced to make comparisons, and ask themselves in all seriousness, "Are our parishes doing the work they ought to do commensurate with the amount of money expended—in a word, are our churches efficient?" It is a very legitimate question to ask, and to many sincere and earnest men a question of much moment.

Taking into account the weekly expense of one minister's church service and Sunday-school, he is surprised to find that for every individual who attends any service (including the Sunday-school and Young People's meeting), the actual per capita outlay is very close to $1. And this in an old New England town! If it be true that in New York City church-going costs those who attend church $3.75 a service *per capita,* then this question of efficiency is certainly opportune.

In a certain city noted as a residential center and boasting of something like sixty thousand inhabitants, there is a splendid church of ancient traditions. This church is very centrally located. It is known to be an "aristocratic" church, and is blessed (or, shall we say, "encumbered") with vast trust funds. Many of the wealthiest people in the city attend upon its services, when they go at all, and contribute heavily to its large budget of expenses.

At a recent service on a bright, cold winter's day, a representative body of church-goers, numbering sixty, were present. This is about the average congregation in a church with a seating capacity of perhaps six hundred. The music was faultless, the choir well balanced, and each singer an artist with an excellent voice. No expense was spared to have only the best music obtainable in that church. The beautiful auditorium was comfortably warm, and many of the pews were privately upholstered for added comfort. The walls were adorned with costly memorial tablets, busts of departed benefactors, historic facts concerning the origin and early traditions of the church, and the names and various academic degrees of a long line of able ministers.

The tinted walls and ceiling made a pleasing and harmonious contrast to the rich tones of the darker woodwork of black walnut and mahogany. Rich cut-glass pendant lights added to the beauty and charm of the interior decorations. Softened sunlight filtered dreamily in through the screened windows. Altogether it was a beautiful and impressive old church of respectable traditions, tender and historic associations, real spiritual atmosphere and exquisite taste. Few churches of the Congregational order could boast of earlier birth or more historic lineage. It was a church to command one's respect and challenge one's heartfelt admiration.

Yet, out of a population of sixty thousand, just sixty, one-tenth of one per cent of the total number of people in that city, were present on that beautiful morning to gain spiritual strength and assurance. And of this sixty, about fifteen were men; twenty were probably maiden ladies; and a dozen or so attractively dressed children, with their mothers, nursemaids, or other female attendants, made up the scattered remainder. In that large church, the small number present gave the impression of a church that was indeed inefficient so far as reaching the multitude was concerned.

When the service was over, but a few—maybe a dozen—paused a moment for friendly greetings and sociability. Most of those present, with heads in the air and looking neither to the right nor to the left, made a "bee line" for the door without even condescending to shake the proffered hand of the minister in the doorway. A few strangers who were present were utterly ignored, and ambled out in each other's company with only the glad handshake and formal greeting of the minister. One does not have to search far to find in the lack of hospitality one reason of the inefficiency of this church.

In the Sunday-school of this society but twenty-eight members were in evidence. It was about the customary attendance. And this number included the teachers and an adult woman's Bible class! The people were well clothed and genteel. The children were unusually "well bred" and fashionably dressed. In short, the seventy or eighty odd people who attended the services of that church that day were of the upper or well-to-do class of society. Around the corner on a side street was another church with perhaps a third of the financial resources of this wealthy parish, but which had a morning congregation of two hundred and fifty and a Sunday-school attendance of over four hundred. Which was the more efficient?

This church is but typical of many in the United States with similar resources and personnel. But is this an efficient church? Does it justify the outlay necessary to sustain it? Plenty of money, ideal location, ancient origin, historic traditions, splendid equipment, aristocratic following—yet here is a church without any apparent life, without even the indications of healthy, normal growth; without any evident or striking message to attract attention or draw the people to it. Even the minister, a saintly man with a long settlement, but very scholarly and "dry," so some folks say, is not the kind of man who would attract and hold the general public. What hope is there for the gospel in a city in which people have the idea that only the "rich" should belong to that church and where the minister is known to be a man of aristocratic tastes and a marked conservative? What of such a church in fifty years with so small a Sunday-school? Unless something unforeseen intervene, because of natural elimination this parish will scarcely perpetuate itself a century hence.

Then what of this ancient church, and the trust funds which it now administers? Already it would seem that here is an unjustifiable economic waste in perpetuating so expensive an equipment for so small a body of followers. The same thing is true of many an old "First Parish" in New England; yes, and in these broad United States as well. Church efficiency is on trial before the jury of the public. What will be the ultimate verdict?

Are such parishes as the foregoing hopeless? Must

ministers throw up their hands in despair and calmly resign themselves to "the god of things as they are?" Shall the men who serve "inefficient" churches continue to preach to fewer and fewer people, as one by one they are called to the higher life, or drop quietly away because of his polite, speculative, carefully guarded and docile utterances? Is this the fate of these "aristocratic" old churches? Has it come to this? We hope not.

The question resolves itself into that of the function of the modern church and of the preacher of religion. There must be a *reason* for this serious state of affairs. And the reason, or reasons, are not far to seek. Is it not, now *frankly,* because the churches and ministers coming under this indictment are "serving the classes and not the masses?"

In the nature of the case, no church of long-standing traditions, aristocratic origin and personnel, and the recipient and administrator of vast trust funds, can hope for or expect more than a very limited class usefulness under the leadership of ministers who are paid to preach to the well-to-do, and who naturally do not wish to antagonize the more influential of their congregation by speaking upon themes which vitally concern the poor man, but which are inevitably concerned with the getting and spending of money. Those who contribute most largely to the minister's salary are likely to be employers of labor, bankers, brokers, and men who are in "business life." They are often inimical to anything that would be calculated to "bite" them or cause uncomfortable pricks of conscience. Such people prevent a minister from preaching that which would attract the working people. Today the differences between capital and labor are so strained and diametrically opposed to one another that the employer and the worker feel they are anything but "brothers in Christ." An ordinary workingman is uncomfortable in the presence of the man of wealth. He feels there is a wide difference in their points of view. Moreover, the wealthy are likely to be better educated, more artistic, more refined, and to have aesthetic tastes and preferences because of the leisure and ability to gratify one's tastes which wealth confers. Therefore, the well-to-do often prefer to be a class apart, and dislike that which jars their finer sensibilities. Unavoidable barriers spring out of this fundamental distinction of wealth and mere wage-earning.

Hence the working people often are made to feel uncomfortable in the same church with the people of means, and, being sensitive to distinctions, they naturally withdraw and leave the wealthy in an isolation of their own creating. This often leaves the "upper classes" in possession of the church. And so, instead of a democratic and Christian institution, we have the "rich man's church" and the "poor man's church"—this last where the people are mostly small contributors belonging to the wage-earning class. The tendency is for "birds of a feather to flock together." That church which keeps itself most democratic, thrives best. No saying is more true than that of Henry Ward Beecher, that when we "attempt to be aristocratic in the church, the church dies." Isn't that precisely the case with some of our older parishes? They have sprung from the wealthy and aristocratic classes; this same wealth has largely contributed to the support of the church as it was passed down through the family from father to son; the "first families" have prided themselves on their attainments and kept aloof from the "common herd"; and now, at this late day, these same parishes in their "old age" are suffering for the "sins of their youth"—sins of both omission and commission—*omission* in that they did not desire to be "democratic" and left out of account those arts of hospitality and fraternity upon which the church depends for its vitality and sociability, and *commission* in that the early constituency was an exclusive body and committed the grave error of ignoring the "common person" and the stranger within the gates. If anyone doubts the aristocratic tendency in many of our churches, let him, a perfect stranger, try to get acquainted with the "first families" in an old New England town or city. [In the West, also.—Editor.]

Only recently a certain minister was warned by some influential members of his congregation not to preach on "social subjects." "And besides," one lady said, "the people who would be attracted to our church by your subject, would not be the kind of people we would care to associate with. They wouldn't give anything to the church, and they might give our church a bad name in the community." Still another minister is authority for the following incident: He was interested in a large number of hardy laboring men who were engaged in a long undertaking in the vicinity of his church. But no sooner had his interest and sympathies become known than he was approached by one of the prominent trustees of his church, a man of wealth and influence, who "advised" him somewhat as follows: "You see, Mr. So-and-So, we don't need that kind in our church. You just confine your energies to people in the parish, and we'll get along all right. Let the other churches have those people. They wouldn't raise the tone of our church anyway! Hadn't you better take a little less interest in these workingmen and a little more in building up our parish?" The strange ideas of "building up" a parish that some people have is the source of much inward amusement to the experienced minister.

It is a fact that, because of this same attitude toward the "common people," many of our churches are on the decline, if not already tottering. Our churches, *theoretically,* have a brave and beautiful gospel; but it is too often handed out in a golden goblet on a crystal platter that makes the "average man" suspicious of it. The "historic" church is too self-satisfied, too snobbish, too elite to attract the family-raising, sober-minded, working man or woman. This is proved by the facts in the case.

And it is not the much criticised minister who keeps people away, as a rule, either! That individual, as I have tried to show, is often hedged about by conventionalities and the dictates and whims of those who contribute to his salary to such an extent that he "cannot do the things that he would." Many a minister with a passion for humanity is circumscribed beyond belief in his endeavor to reach and help humanity. The wealthy, who do not feel the pinch of poverty, are not interested in the cry of economic justice. Theirs is an apathy born of luxury. They cannot feel the sympathy for the downtrodden and oppressed that springs in the heart of the true follower of Jesus Christ.

Generally there are a few of the exclusive, stylish, and "cultured" of society who, by their indirect influence, keep away the working-class people whose presence would be highly desirable in democratising many a wealthy parish. It is these people who make less wealthy newcomers uncomfortable, self-conscious,

and of short duration in the church. Churches which are inefficient are frequently "ruled" by one or a few men and women who seem to dictate the policy of the church while no one wants to oppose them for fear of losing their financial support. Cases are on record where there has been a gradual elimination of democratic, truth-loving, and sensitive souls, who prefer to go elsewhere or not at all rather than be insulted, ignored, and walked over by certain individuals who have assumed the self-appointed office of dictator.

Then there are those timid souls who live in constant fear of their minister's "shocking" someone or wounding their feelings by his straightforward utterances. These same people are constantly counseling their minister to be more "moderate," more "tactful," more "diplomatic," and less "plain-spoken" in his enunciation of principles. "That's all true enough," someone says, "but I don't know how Mr. So-and-So will take it." Or again, "I wouldn't say that if I were you. You know Mrs. Blank is terribly sensitive on that subject." One lady who thought she was doing her minister a kindness, once said, quoting another, "Doesn't that young man know that he cannot tell the truth?"

Have some people arrived at the point where they dislike having their minister tell the truth? So it would sometimes seem. Yet they repeat together the following or similar covenant: "In the love of truth, and in the spirit of Jesus Christ, we join for the worship of God and the service of man." If a minister is not in the ministry to tell the truth, then surely there is something the matter with the ministry, or the minister, or perhaps with both. Alas! it may be this same juggling with truth, and this timidity on the part of certain of the laity that is having a disastrous effect upon many conservative churches.

When religion was plain-spoken and unpopular, it did not lack the courage of its convictions. There are those who remember that the old meeting-houses were once full of people, and that the churches were once proud to be "progressive" in the forefront of the battle for religious freedom. The more despised and criticised they were, the more efficient did they prove themselves to be. Surely, there is nothing to be gained by avoiding the issues of the day, and crying, "Peace! Peace! when there is no peace." May not the remedy for much of the inefficiency in our churches be found in a fuller freedom on the part of many ministers in dealing with social and economic questions now outlawed in some of the more reactionary of our churches? That would seem to be the logical inference to the keen observer of social conditions. Overcome this lethargy now stifling many parishes by demanding of the minister absolutely fearless preaching, plain-spoken and unequivocal conversation, and an out-and-out championship of the cause of the "poor and needy" of society. The church that did that would not want for a *following*.

But how can a minister do this when he is frowned upon by the ruling power that pays the salaries? Cannot some means be devised to render a preacher financially independent of his congregation? Only with that assured could a man be true to his ideal in all his innate strength of character. As the church is run at present, the minister who would do his duty by the world is likely to find himself "out of a job." He must look out for his "bread and butter" first. The welfare of humanity is, perforce, a secondary consideration. This apparently insurmountable fact stands solidly in the way of progress and efficiency in many an old "First Parish."

Yet one cannot help asking why it is that a minister should spend years in preparation and study for his ministry, if, when he takes a church, he is not allowed to mention his mature convictions and the necessarily advanced ideas reached by his long research and investigation? Must a minister preach only the accepted ideas of lay men and women in his congregation who have not been accustomed to advanced thinking because of their necessarily limited study and provincial outlook? Must he stifle his intellectual convictions, check his expanding vision, bury his love for the cause of truth and humanity, part with his ideals, and sink to the same mental and spiritual plane as the ordinary man of business, or the woman of wealth, fashion, and society? Why need a minister study in preparation for his life work if, after he is called to a parish, the people who pay his salary do not care to hear the results of thinking, study, and spiritual development? What encouragement is there to a man of ideals, of spirituality, of principle, of vision and of action, if he finds that his few wealthy parishioners are content with an innocuous gospel, a few poetic flights of fancy, a modified orthodoxy, and a calm, dispassionate enunciation of the conventional, ethical and moral standards of society?

Do the controlling members of our historic parishes desire anything new or helpful? Do they want the "stranger within their gates" as a fellow-member of their congregations? Do they welcome *truth*—theological, ethical, or social? and are they open-minded, candid, and fearless in their attitude toward new ideas? *The present* answer to these questions is plainly evident in our dwindling congregations, lifeless Sunday-schools, over-endowed churches, and supine indifference to the alarming social injustice and evils now widely prevalent in every community.

Granted that the older churches are usually foremost in "charity work," that they are ordinarly "cultured and refined," and that they are rich in glorious traditions, yet in reality there is no very good reason why they shouldn't be. Ordinarily, their laity are a prosperous lot, commercially, and have had many advantages in being the heirs of the advanced thought of their pioneer ancestors. "Credit to whom credit is due"; yet in consideration of their intellectual and commercial heritage, perhaps their spirituality would not outweigh that of their less favored contemporaries. And a wealth of glorious traditions, while excellent in itself, cannot atone for any lack of the pioneer spirit now seen to exist in many parishes which are all too content to "rest on their laurels."

A church without reasonable numbers and a promising future, is inefficient and hardly worth the time and money necessary to prolong its existence. And for a live man to "throw his life away" in serving a hopeless cause, is neither Christian nor laudable.

Unless some of our older churches are willing to open their doors and windows—yes, and ventilators, and skylights, too—unless the "ruling power" of these aristocratic parishes will permit the men whom they call and install as their ministers to serve God and the community, instead of the interests of a particular class—unless this is done ere long, many churches might just as well "give up the ghost"—let it not be

called the "spirit"—and be relegated to the limbo of oblivion. For such is evolution.

"Are our churches efficient?" Some evidently are not. And until those which are not wake up to the true causes of their inefficiency, they will continue to exhibit the easily recognized symptoms of a paralyzing disease which has been slowly creeping over many of the older parishes—the paralysis of wealth misapplied, energy misdirected, democracy annihilated, conservatism enthroned, truth sedulously expurgated, and moral cowardice veiled in the garb of indifference.

In a community not more than a thousand miles from Boston, there is a church which has only thirty-seven regular contributors out of a field of three hundred and two nominal parishioners. More than two hundred "post-mortem" Unitarians, as Dr. Savage facetiously characterized them, never set foot inside of "their" church, or the church of their fathers. Less than one hundred souls are reached directly during the year by this church with any degree of regularity. The others are completely separated from churches and church-going, though at one time they all attended that church. "There's a reason."

Is such a church a "splendid opportunity" for the young and enthusiastic minister fired with a holy passion for service to God and to humanity? If anyone thinks it is, he would soon get "taken down a peg" at the first meeting of the board of trustees. Or isn't such a church rather a convenient and easy way of getting a living by small exertion and by pandering to the whims of the "ruling class?" Isn't such a church a good burying ground for ambition, talents, usefulness, and ability? It would seem to be a more appropriate place for a superannuated minister, "with one foot in the grave," to die in.

Are we to go on spending thousands of dollars to equip our ministerial timber only to send them into dead parishes to "hide their light under a bushel" and subserve the existing order of church procedure? God forbid! Let us change the churches, and then the supply of ministers will take care of itself.

When a church ceases to be democratic, it ceases to be efficient. It cannot be democratic so long as it relies for its support on the large contributions of a few men and women whom it is expected to cater to. Therefore, if it cannot exist without these wealthy "patrons" and "dictators," let it dissolve or die—because it is surely dying in certain localities.

We need not so much an "adequate theology" as we do a *"democratic constituency."* History demonstrates that the only movement which is active and permanent is the one that is firmly rooted in the fertile soil of the great middle or working class of society. Nature tends to eliminate all non-productive and non-reproductive individuals or species. Hence for any movement, religious or economic, to depart from the bourgeois and proletarian classes, is *suicide in itself.*

Will our inefficient churches heed the warning of science and history ere it is too late, and return voluntarily to a democratic basis? Or will it be necessary for our old parishes to die a natural death, and suffer their principles to go on to larger usefulness under the leadership of the more radical and venturesome of our latter-day prophets? To all of us this is a grave question. What will be the answer to it from those older churches which are already confronted by this charge of inefficiency and are unable to plead anything but "guilty?"

A PERPLEXED PASTOR.

This article, as might be inferred by the close reader, was written from the standpoint of New England, and that of a Unitarian minister. But it represents so much truth in regard to some churches in all the denominations and in all sections of the country that we are glad to give it publicity.

EDITOR.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of UNITY:

In the UNITY of March 14, the Rev. John Haynes Holmes has a short article on "The Lawrence Strike." And while sympathizing with the spirit that cries aloud and spares not, I am wondering if the cause of humanity is advanced or retarded by oratorical exaggeration.

For illustration, take the phrase, "greedy, idle, purse-proud, protective-tariff-fattened owners of the Lawrence mills." Now may I ask Mr. Holmes if these men who are stockholders of the mills are the kind of people he describes? Does he know these men, and are they worse than other men? In other words does Mr. Holmes really know what he is talking about? I think he will confess that he is using the power of imagination.

Some of these men doubtless are greedy and idle and they may be fat. But is it right or honest to so describe people because they have invested their money in mill stock which has given work to many Europeans, who gladly accept the opportunity to make a new home in a foreign land? For the most part, these foreigners are a quiet and industrious class of people. Fall River has thousands of the same class of operatives, and they are good people, making excellent citizens. Fall River is a city of over a hundred thousand people with not a house of ill fame, or assignation,—and how many American cities can say as much?

In my church there are workers and owners of the stock in the cotton mills, and I cannot see why both classes are not "folks." Both have their short-comings, and their good qualities. But for me indiscriminately to condemn either class would seem from my standpoint foolish, because it would not be the truth.

Under the present system, Mr. Holmes' salary is much more than mine. He is more valuable to the world than I am, and the world thinks so. Because he and other eminent ministers receive larger remuneration than the great majority of preachers, would it be just to condemn them as greedy, purse-proud, protective-tariff-fattened grandees? No. Some ministers are greedy, but the dollar pile is not necessarily the dividing line.

Perhaps Mr. Edwin Alfred Rumball's "As They Would Say Today," at the beginning of the editorials, might suggest something if turned around.

CARLYLE SUMMERBELL.

Fall River, Mass.

I gave my son a palace
And a kingdom to control;
The palace of his body,
The kingdom of his soul.

—*Julia Ward Howe.*

The Robert Browning Centennial

ORCHESTRA HALL

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Chicago, April 20, 1912.

Dear Friend:

The seventh day of May, 1912, was the centenary of the birth of Robert Browning, and in common with other communities throughout America it is proposed that the lovers of the poet in Chicago celebrate that event in an apprpriate manner. It is particularly appropriate that the people of America should do the poet's memory this honor, for his voice was ever that of a lover of democracy and freedom, and this fact was recognized in this country as soon as in any other.

It is desired to make this celebration as broad and as representative as possible, and to that end the projectors are inviting as guests and supporters men and women who have been interested in the things for which Browning stood, and who represent the literary and social progress of our city.

They ask you therefore to lend your name to the celebration and invite you to take such part in it as your inclination may direct.

Kindly communicate with the Secretary your intentions in the matter.

The program will be followed by a reception to friends, delegates, and distinguished guests, in the Grand Foyer of the Hall.

Are you willing to co-operate in making this occasion the success it promises to be? If so, please oblige the committee with an early reply to this note with subscription and permission to use your name, or an order for tickets as per schedule below.

Sincerely yours,

Imogen Pierce.

3912 Vincennes Ave. Secy.-Treas.

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RELIGION AND PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

The immorality of private control of public utilities has long been evident to students of the question of public ownership. Many writers have claimed that if the only advantage of municipal ownership were the removal from municipal life of the horrible, debauching influence of street railway, water, light, telephone and other public service corporations, it would be well worth the while.

Few cities have suffered from the corruption of these corporations as has San Francisco. This fact lends additional interest to the unanimous report of the Social Service Committee of the recent Men and Religion Forward Movement of the Protestant churches in San Francisco, dealing with the evils of its municipal life.

One of the most important questions before this committee was: "What are the most glaring weaknesses in your municipal life today?" It was answered as follows:

"Private ownership and operation of public utilities. These corporations supply the funds and direct the organization that gives life to the political power of the vice and crime of the city. At a number of elections in this city we find the district in which live the wealthier persons, or those who are the principal owners of the stocks and bonds of public-service corporations on what is known as 'Pacific Heights,' voting almost as a unit with the lower section of the same district called 'Pacific street,' where are located the dives and the principal tenderloin district of the city."

Notice is taken of the thousands of merchants and others who were excused from jury duty in the bribery trials of the officers and employes of the corrupt public-service corporations. They declared they would not convict a bribe-giver, because "We have to do it ourselves in our business." The report says a further weakness in municipal life is:

"Lack of proper civic spirit among many business and professional men and a large part of the public, which permits grafting in the grant of privileges by the municipality, and in the relations of the businesses and industries of the community with each other."

In reply to the question, "What were the most conspicuous cases of graft in your city government?" the following reply was made:

"The cases of the Supervisors' confessions of the bribery of the Mayor and sixteen members of the Board of Supervisors during the Ruef-Schmitz regime, in 1906-1907, by officers and employes of the United Railroads, Pacific Telephone Company, Home Telephone Company, San Francisco Gas and Electric Company (controlled by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company), Parkside Company, and other public-service corporations, the evidence of which was unearthed by Francis J. Heney, Rudolph Spreckels and William J. Burns."

Municipal ownership of water and street railroads are given as two of the dominating political, social and economic movements in San Francisco. The low wage paid its employes by the street railway is declared to be less than sufficient to enable any man to support a wife and family. The practice of that company of giving the preference to inexperienced men as new employes is commented on, and stated to be of the character of the sweating system. Pointing out a way for church work, the report says:

"'No direct action has been taken by any church brotherhood towards correcting the oppressions imposed upon the people by the public-service corporations, through bad service, impure water, poisonous gas and like evils." The condition of the privately owned water supply is further emphasized: "The Board of Health's last monthly report in chemical analysis shows nitrites in every reservoir of the Water Company. Under standards of Illinois State Board of Health, nitrites are prohibited in surface waters."

In this report there is no hypocritic pandering to, or ignoring the evil practices of the "best" citizens, while calling attention to the crimes or vices of the "worst" elements in the community.

THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE.
A Monthly Magazine of Progress in Religion
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THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE
is for all of us, all together. It aims to be the organ of no restricted section, no segregated group, no separating party, and no "peculiar idea." It stands for "the open door" for ideas, with a square deal for all sides.

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THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE
104 East Twentieth Street, New York

The answer to the query about social distinctions in San Francisco says:

"Social distinctions are less marked on the Pacific Coast than anywhere else in the country. In San Francisco there is no distinction between respectable, well-behaved, decently clad persons. A small group of idle, newly-rich persons try to create 'an exclusive social set' by advertising in newspaper social columns their all-night dances, where champagne and other expensive liquors are drunk in large quantities."

Further comment is made on the society dances given by agents of costly wines in the discussion of the Barbary Coast dance halls, which says that there are twenty-nine dance halls in the city connected with saloons in the Tenderloin and Barbary Coast, and "Subject to similar criticism are fashionable society dances where they sell large quantities of champagne and other expensive wines under saloon licenses."

The Movement originated in New York. There were sent to some seventy cities in the United States the printed queries which resulted in the interesting San Francisco report. Much credit is due the Rev. Wm. Nat. Friend, pastor of Howard Presbyterian Church, Chairman of the Committee, for the splendid work done by him in bringing together the committee of men and women of all the Protestant denominations who compiled this valuable report.

—*Edward P. E. Troy.*

THE MAXIMS OF PTAHHOTEP

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